

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a detail description of the research methodology which covers the research design, the research site and participants, the research procedures, the data collection, the data analysis, and the concluding remarks.

#### **3.1 Formulation of Problems**

This study was conducted to explore the application of theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy and explore the students' responses towards the application of theme-based instruction in literacy learning. Based on the objectives of the study, two major questions are addressed as follows:

- a. Is the theme-based instruction applicable for nurturing literacy?
- b. What are the students' responses towards the application of theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy?

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The present study is under qualitative research paradigm (Alwasilah, 2012; Silverman, 2005). For the purpose of this study, this study was aimed at exploring certain phenomenon in pedagogy setting where the teacher acted as a researcher who applied theme-based instruction used to develop students' literacy skills. In particular, this study was characterized as a case study. Case study is considered appropriate for conducting this study, because this method is used to yield specific insights and findings that can contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning practices both for individuals and institutions (Patton, 2012). In addition, the teacher as researcher participated in this study could learn and think more systematically, since she was involved in a holistic, grounded, and sensitive to context (Mwaluko & Ryan,

2000). The main purpose of conducting a case study is that the study emphasized on the “process use” and enhanced the “developmental evaluation” (Patton, 2011) involving an ongoing learning, internal improvement, and program development of the teacher conducting the study or the institution involved in the study.

### **3.3 The Research Site and Participants**

This study was conducted in a private junior high school placed in Bandung, West Java. This laboratory school is located in the area of university where I enroll a postgraduate study, so that it is accessible by the researcher. As a laboratory school, this school is welcomed for pre-service teachers’ teaching practice, educational research, and other professional development programs. As part of code of ethics, to begin with this research, I contacted the school’s principal to get permission for conducting a research. The school’s principal was very welcome and provided opportunities for me to prepare and organize a research. At first, he suggested me to observe the teaching and learning process, then she instructed one of English teachers namely Mrs. Lina to accompany me during my research program.

In this study, the participants involved the teacher as researcher as well as the seventh grade students of junior high school. In this study, the teacher as researcher was involved in the teaching and learning process to implement theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy. In addition, to cope with the purposes of the study, the selection of the students as the research participants was primarily based on several factors suggested by Cameron (2001) and Pinter (2006) such as the age of the learners, the learners’ first language literacy experiences, their ability to read and write in their first language, and the level of exposure to English as a foreign language. Besides, in the pre-observation of this study, I firstly interviewed Mrs. Lina to get general description about each class in the selected school. After conducting the interview and considering the ideas from Cameron (2001) and Pinter (2006), the seventh

graders were chosen as participants in this study, because the age of the students in this level is considered proper for their maturity in the first language, their ability in literacy of their first language, and the level of exposure to English as foreign language given in the previous grades. In addition, in this study, I also involved Mrs. Lina as an observer who reviewed the instructions by completing the observer's checklist.

In attempt to explore the development of students' literacy, three out of thirty two students were selected to see their development of literacy skills. The three students were selected based on high achiever student, middle achiever student, and low achiever student categories. To clarify, they were primarily selected based on the teacher's observation during the teaching and learning process.

### 3.4 The Research Procedures

In this research, there are several procedures that should be taken in applying theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy. In particular, some frameworks for implementing theme-based instruction are adapted from Brown (2001); Cameroon (2001), and Sundayana (2014); while, the framework for evaluating the development of literacy is adapted from Bailey & Heritage (2008). To have a brief description of the research procedures, each stage is outlined and illustrated below:

**Table 3.1: Research Procedures and Timeline**

Stages	2015 Timeline	Activities
General Preparation	4 <sup>th</sup> May – 30 May	Contacted the school and the teacher; observed the class and the teaching and learning process
Teacher's preparation	1 <sup>st</sup> June – 25 <sup>th</sup> July	Prepared and designed the

and design process		theme-based instruction
Pre-Implementation	27 <sup>th</sup> July – 1 <sup>st</sup> August	Introduced the theme to the students
Implementation	2 <sup>nd</sup> August – 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Theme-based instruction process
Evaluation of formative data	Ongoing from August - September	Evaluated and reflected the theme-based instruction and students' literacy development

In addition, to have a brief description of four stages in theme-based instruction, each stage is outlined as follows:

- a. **Planning the theme**, in this stage, the teacher decided a theme used to teach literacy. In this research, the theme used to teach literacy was adapted from the units of the textbook and it was developed from the students' needs and interests. The main theme in this study was about My World and it was then divided into sub-themes which generally included the Countries, Tourism Places, and Travelling.
- b. **Planning the contents**, in this stage, the teacher designed and developed the thematic contents gained from multiple resources both from the textbook and the authentic materials. In this study, the content materials were specifically focused on developing reading and writing skills in integrated ways.
- c. **Planning and doing the instruction**, in this stage, the theme-based instructions were applied in the classroom instruction which involved several stages such as initial activity, general activity, reading activity, and culminating activity (Sundayana, 2014).
- d. **Evaluation**, in the context of this study, the theme-based instruction was evaluated by using observer's checklist and students' self-evaluation. An analysis of students' self-evaluation would be meaningful to gain feedbacks from the

students and improve the instructions. It was also useful to predict the possible themes suggested by the students that could be applied in other instructions.

**Table 3.2: The Schematic of Teaching Schedules in Theme-based Instruction**

No.	Date	Themes/Topics
1.	04 August 2015	Introduction
2.	05 August 2015	Planning the Theme
3.	11 August 2015	Theme: My World
4.	12 August 2015	Subtheme 1: Countries
5.	25 August 2015	Subtheme 2: Tourism Places
6.	26 August 2015	Subtheme 3: Traveling
7.	1 September 2015	Writing activities
8.	2 September 2015	Evaluation

### 3.5 The Data Collection

In this study, the data will be collected by means of several data collections and instruments involving collections of documents, portfolios, observation, students' self-evaluation, and interview.

#### 3.5.1 Collection of Documents

In this study, the use of collections of documents could be valuable source of information in helping the researcher to understand the central phenomenon in a study (Creswell, 2012). The collections of documents were in the forms of syllabus and the teacher's or students' textbook. In general preparation of this study, the documents of syllabus and the textbook used in the seventh grade were gathered. The syllabus and the textbook were used by the researcher to design and plan a model of

theme-based instruction. In the context of this study, the syllabus and the textbook was also used to develop the themes for the instructions. The major theme was then developed into sub-themes based on the Thematic Unit and Theme Immersion models (Sundayana, 2014).

### **3.5.2 Observation**

In this study, the use of observation was aimed to monitor and to evaluate the implementation of theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy. It was used because observation could reflect a real tacit understanding and theory in-use of a situation which could not be revealed from other instruments (Alwasilah, 2012). Besides, observation was intended to see the teacher and students' behaviors that occurred naturally during the instructions and to record or make notes from the conditions happened in the classroom (Fathoni, 2006). Classroom observation was conducted for four meetings of the teaching and learning processes. In this study, observation involved two main instruments which are:

#### **a. Observer Checklists**

The use of observer checklist in this study was aimed to monitor the teaching and learning process during the application of theme-based instruction. In this study, an observer monitored and helped the teacher in reviewing the teaching and learning process. The use of observer was aimed at getting a wide perspectives from an outsider. The observer in this study was chosen for several considerations such as he or she should have appropriate understanding about theme-based instruction and literacy development, he or she has unrestricted time to follow the teaching and learning processes, and he or she has a range of experiences in teaching English as a foreign language especially in secondary levels. From these considerations; moreover, an observer of this study was done by a seventh grade teacher of the selected school namely Mrs. Lina. In addition, the criteria stated in the observer's

checklist was synthesized from several frameworks of the theme-based instruction in teaching literacy such as Brown (2001); Cameron (2001); and Fredericks, et.al. (1993) cited in Sundayana (2014).

**Table 3.3: Field Notes or Observer Checklist**

No.	Criteria	Yes	No
1.	Does the instruction meet the goals?		
2.	Does the instruction encourage the students' interest?		
3.	Are the students challenged to be creative in their thinking?		
4.	Does the instruction require higher level thinking skill?		
5.	Does the instruction encourage cooperative learning?		
6.	Does the instruction use a good balance of whole class, small group, and individual activities?		
7.	Do the students appear to be interested and actively engaged in learning?		
8.	Is the theme appropriate for seventh/eighth grade students?		
9.	Are the resources appropriate for students and relevant to the thematic unit?		
10.	Does the instruction integrate other curricular areas?		

### **b. Video Recording**

Video recording was used to monitor and to review the teaching and learning process (Alwasilah, 2012). Since the researcher took on the role as a teacher, it would be difficult for her to interrupt the teaching-learning process such as by taking notes of the situation in the classroom. Therefore, video recording was employed in this study to capture every important detail of the teacher's and students' behavior during the

teaching and learning process. From video recording, the researcher could review the process of theme-based instruction from one stage to another stage and analyze the application of theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy learning in the classroom.

### **3.5.3 Portfolios**

In this study, the use of portfolios was aimed to review the students' literacy development. In addition, portfolios was used to check the progress of the students' literacy learning as well as to provide a source of feedbacks for the teaching and learning process (Brown, 2001; McMillan, 2007; Douglas G. W. & Jared A. C, 2008). In this study, portfolios were in the forms of students' writing which were collected at the end of the lessons or each meeting.

### **3.5.4 Students' Self-Evaluation**

Students' self-evaluation was aimed to administer the students' responses towards literacy learning that had been experienced in the instructions. Besides, it was administered to explore the possible themes that would be learned in the following instructions. In accordance with these aims, Sundayana (2014) states that the students' self-evaluation might provide general feedbacks for teacher towards the instructions. This instrument would contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning, since each view was reviewed thoroughly within the instructions.

### **3.5.5 Interview**

The use of interview in this study was aimed to provide more comprehensible data and it was taken to obtain in-depth information about the students' responses in the application of theme-based instruction in nurturing literacy. The interview was conducted to several participants to gain more information and perception which were not fully gained from other instruments (Alwasilah, 2006). In this study, the interview



was structured by using open-ended questions. It was conducted informally where the participants could be more expressive in delivering their perceptions without any pressure of being interviewed.

### **3.6 The Data Analysis**

In this study, the data was analysed descriptively requiring six major steps such as preparing and organizing the data, exploring and coding the data, describing findings and forming themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting the findings, and validating the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2012, p.236). To have more comprehensible findings, the data was analysed based on triangulation and rich data technique in order to minimize bias of data analysed. Triangulation is a technique in collecting and analyzing the data which are derived from multiple data sources aimed to minimize bias on data presentation of the study (Alwasilah, 2012, p.130). In this study, the data was analysed from multiple data sources involving several major instruments such as collections of documents, observation, portfolios, students' self-evaluation, and interview. The analysis of this study will also be based on two major research questions and they will be analysed by using theories or frameworks underpinning this study. The first and second research questions will be particularly analysed based on the theories of theme-based instruction which are mostly adapted from Cameron (2001); Brown (2001); and Sundayana (2014). Afterward, in order to have more comprehensible data analysis, the results of the study were then analysed and interpreted into a coherent description related to the theories and previous research reports relevant to the objectives of the study.

### **3.7 Concluding Remarks**

This section has reviewed the methodology of the research which include the research design, research site and participants, data formation, procedures, and its analysis. To

have more generating qualitative data analysis, this research is responsive to the research questions and it will be more described in the fourth chapter.